

## Message Text

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AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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TAGS: BGEN, EGEN, EIND, SA, KS

SUBJECT: ALLEGED CANCELLATION OF JUBAIL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT

REF: STATE 218458, JIDDA 6005

1. POST HAS MADE QUICK SURVEY OF ITS SOURCES TO SEE IF IT CAN IDENTIFY A GRAIN OF FACT TO SUPPORT REPORT PROVIDED IN REF DEPTTEL. KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCE INSIDE ROYAL COMMISSION FOR JUBAIL (RCJ), UPON HEARING SANTIZED VERSION OF DEPTTEL, COMMENTED "THAT'S NEWS TO US." HE WAS PUZZLED AS TO WHY PRINCE MUHAMMAD'S DESALINATION PROJECT SHOULD HAVE BEEN PICKED OUT IN PARTICULAR. RCJ DRAWING UP PAPERS ON THAT PROJECT AT THIS TIME AND IT HAS NO INDICATION FROM RIYADH THAT THERE HAS BEEN A SHIFT IN SIGNALS.

2. POST HAS BEEN FOLLOWING JUBAIL ACTIVITY CLOSELY IN RECENT WEEKS AND WE HAVE HAD NO INDICATION THAT ANY CANCELLATIONS ARE IN THE WIND. CONGENOFF ON AUGUST 29 REVIEWED PROGRESS OF JUBAIL PORT COMPLEX WITH SUPERVISING ENGINEER HKND HE INDICATED NO CHANGE IN CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM HE IS SUPERVISING. JUBAIL ALSO DISCUSSED WITH JU YUNG CHUNG, CHAIRMAN OF HYUNDAI CONSTRUCTION, ON VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA LAST WEEK AND HE INDICATED HIS COMPANY WAS PUSHING AHEAD WITH BOTH PROJECTS HIS COMPANY HAS AT JUBAIL. CHUNG TOLD UNCLASSIFIED

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CONGENOFF THAT MATTER OF KOREAN VISAS HAD BEEN RESOLVED WITH

SAG AND HIS CONSTRUCTION COMPANY WOULD START BUILDING UP TO LEVEL OF 6,000 KOREAN WORKMEN BY SUMMER 1977 AS PLANNED. UNDERSTAND FROM PETROMIN SOURCE, AGAIN LAST WEEK, THAT ITS PROJECTS AT JUBAIL, WHICH REMAIN IN PLANNING STAGE, ARE STILL MOVING FORWARD AND, PERHAPS, AT A SLIGHTLY QUICKENING PACE.

3. COMMENT: PERHAPS SOURCE OF REPORT, PROVIDED IN REFTEL, IS CONFUSED OVER GENERAL SLOW-DOWN ON ALL FRONTS AT JUBAIL. DREDGING OF PORT BASIN, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS BEEN SLOWED BECAUSE THE CAP ROCK FOUND THERE IS HARDER AND THICKER THAN WAS EXPECTED. AT THE MOMENT PORT'S DREDGING PROGRAM IS THREE MONTHS BEHIND TIME AND, ACCORDING TO ENGINEER

ON PORT PROJECT, THE DREDGING ACTIVITY IS ACCOMPLISHING IN SEVEN DAYS WHAT WAS THOUGHT WOULD TAKE SIX DAYS. ALSO, WE HAVE NOTED IN OTHER MESSAGES (SEE DHAHRAN 797, DHAHRAN 1076), GAS GATHERING PROJECT IS UNDER REVIEW AND IT IS ASSUMED THAT PROJECT WILL BE STRETCHED OUT TO 1981 RATHER THAN THE 1979 AS WAS ENVISAGED WHEN PROJECT WAS PLANNED. OTHER COMPONENTS AT JUBAIL, SUCH AS PRINCE MUHAMMAD'S DESALINATION PROJECT, ALSO ARE EXPECTED TO BE IN PLACE TWO-THREE YEARS LATER THAN PLANNED. IT MAKES LITTLE SENSE TO HAVE ONE OR TWO ELEMENTS OF JUBAIL'S INFRASTRUCTURE IN PLACE WHILE THE OTHERS ARE DELAYED OR NOW PROGRAMMED TO COME ON STREAM YEARS LATER THAN ANTICIPATED.

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